

**IN THE CLAIMS:**

It is proposed to amend claims 18 and 21-24 herein. All pending claims are presented below. This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application. Please enter the claims as amended.

**Listing of Claims**

1-17. (Canceled).

18. (Currently amended) A composition, comprising:

a *Streptococcus suis* serotype 2 ~~comprising~~ knockout mutant wherein the knockout mutation is in the capsular polysaccharide (cps) gene cluster as set forth in SEQ ID NO: 9, wherein the ~~Streptococcus suis~~ comprises a knockout mutation is in the cpsB gene encoding the cpsB protein as set forth in SEQ ID NO: 13, the cpsE gene encoding the cpsE protein as set for in SEQ ID NO:16, or the cpsF gene encoding the cpsF protein as set forth in SEQ ID NO:17 or a combination thereof, the knockout mutation causing a deficiency in cellular capsular expression, and

a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier or adjuvant.

19-20. (Canceled)

21. (Currently amended) The composition of claim 18, wherein said *Streptococcus suis* ~~deficient in capsular expression~~ serotype 2 knockout mutant is capable of surviving in an immune-competent host.

22. (Currently amended) The composition of claim 21, wherein said *Streptococcus suis* ~~deficient in capsular expression~~ serotype 2 knockout mutant is capable of surviving at least 4-5 days in said immune-competent host.

23. (Currently amended) The composition of claim 18, wherein said *Streptococcus suis* ~~deficient in capsular expression~~ serotype 2 knockout mutant expresses a *Streptococcus* virulence factor or antigenic determinant.

24. (Currently amended) The composition of claim 18, wherein said *Streptococcus suis* ~~deficient in capsular expression~~ serotype 2 knockout mutant expresses a non-*Streptococcus* protein.

25. (Previously presented) The composition of claim 24, wherein said non-*Streptococcus* protein has been derived from a pathogen.

26-31. (Canceled)

32. (Previously presented) The composition of claim 21, wherein said *Streptococcus suis* has been produced by homologous recombination.

33. (Previously presented) The composition of claim 21, wherein said *Streptococcus suis* is capable of surviving at least 8-10 days in said host.

34-55. (Canceled).

56. (New) The composition of claim 18, wherein the knockout mutation is in the cpsB gene encoding the cpsB protein as set forth in SEQ ID NO: 13.

57. (New) The composition of claim 18, wherein the knockout mutation is in the cpsE gene encoding the cpsE protein as set for in SEQ ID NO:16.

58. (New) The composition of claim 18, wherein the knockout mutation is in the cpsF gene encoding the cpsF protein as set forth in SEQ ID NO:17.

59. (New) A composition, comprising:

a *Streptococcus suis* mutant wherein the mutation is in the capsular polysaccharide (cps) gene cluster as set forth in SEQ ID NO: 9, wherein the mutation is produced by *in vitro* homologous recombination in the capsular polysaccharide (cps) gene cluster, the mutation causing a deficiency in cellular capsular expression.